

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

SAM-01 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05 IO-13 SSM-03 OC-06 CCO-00

OMB-01 SCA-01 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 MCT-01 COME-00

DOT-00 EB-07 FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00

DLOS-06 OES-06 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /127 W

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O P 301322Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1630

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 77

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

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FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 7164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

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SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION AUGUST 29-30

REF: BEIRUT 7146

1. SUMMARY: POLITICAL INTEREST AND HOPE NOW INCREASINGLY FOCUSING ON PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS, WHO EXPECTED TO VISIT DAMASCUS AUG 31 FOR ONE DAY. RAYMOND EDDE, LIKE MANY IN BEIRUT, BELIEVES THAT NEXT WEEKS WILL SEE EITHER POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION OR ALL-OUT SYRIAN MILITARY INITIATIVE. PHALANGE MILITARY CELEBRATION WELCOMES NEW MILITIA RECRUITS. PAKRADOUNI CONFIDENT OF SYRIAN STRATEGY. PALESTINIANS GENERALLY CONCILIATORY TOWARD SYRIANS, WHILE PURSUING TOTAL MOBILIZATION. ARAB LEAGUE PEACE PLAN PROGRESS AWAITS WORD FROM DAMASCUS, BUT PHALANGE AND PALESTINIANS REPORTED AGREED IN ANY CASE ON LOCAL CEASEFIRE IN MOUNTAINS. ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT MAY BE SMALL MEETING OF KEY CHIEFS OF STATE (REPORTEDLY FAVORED BY EGYPT) OR LARGE MEETING. FOREIGN MINISTERS EXPECTED MEET IN CAIRO SEPT 1. JUNBLATT CALLS FOR "SAUDI INITIATIVE." GROUND ACTIVITY IN BEIRUT MOSTLY CONFRONTATION LINE FIRE FIGHTS. SIEGE OF TRIPOLI TIGHTENS, AS CHRISTIANS APPARENTLY MORE INTERESTED IN FIGHTING THAN SYRIANS. MANY REFUGEES FROM BEIRUT NOW IN AREA OF ISRAELI BORDER, WHERE PHALANGISTS REPOTEDLY CONTROL IMPORTANT BORDER TOWN. ARTILLERY FIRE IN HIGH METN AND ALEY CASA. "POPULAR RESISTANCE" ESCAPADES CONTINUE IN BEKAA. SYRIANS REINFORCING IN JEZZINE AREA AND CONTINUE ARTILLERY FIRE, WICH CUT SIDON AREA ELECTRICITY. LEBANESE NOW NEED GOOD-CONDLE CERTIFICATES TO CROSS BORDER INTO SYRIA. END SUMMARY.

2. SARKIS TO VISIT DAMASCUS. PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS EXPECTED TO VISIT DAMASCUS AUG 31, VIA SYRIAN HELICOPTER, AND RETURN SAME DAY. NO INDICATIONS WHAT SPECIFICS MIGHT BE DISCUSSED, WHILE SPECULATION COVERS WHOLE SPECTRUM OF ISSUES INVOLVED IN LEBANESE CIVIL WAR. ON KEY ISSUE OF SYRIAN MILITARY PRESENCE, BEIRUT OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT SARKIS MIGHT SEEK REGULARIZATION OF SYRIAN PRESENCE THROUGH CONFIDENTIAL

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LEBANESE-SYRIAN GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT (AFTER HE ASSUMES OFFICE), AND SYRIAN COMMIMENT TO DEFINITE TIME LIMIT (PERHAPS ONE YEAR). AN-NAHAR BELIEVES THAT SARKIS WILL ALSO SEEK SYRIAN SUPPORT OF CURRENT ARAB LEAGUE PEACE PLAN. LEFTIST RADIO SPECULATES THAT SWEARING-IN OF SARKIS COULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE SEPT 23. L'ORIENT REPORTS "FROM A SOURCE CLOSE TO PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS" PLAN FOR

POST-WAR LEBANESE ARMY WITH CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN CHRISTIAN AREAS, MOSLEM ELEMENT IN MOSLEM AREAS, AND MIXED FORCE IN MIXED AREAS, BUT A UNIFIED COMMAND. PLAN MAY NOT WORK, OR ATTRACT RETURN OF THOSE LEBANESE ARMY ELEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN SITTING OUT WAR, UNLESS CLEARLY AN INTERIM MEASURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY COMPLETE REUNIFICATION WITHIN FORESEEABLE TIME. IN DEPARTURE FROM PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS, WHICH L'ORIENT INTERPRETS AS GETURE OF SUPPORT, MARONITE PATRIARCH KHURAYSH VISITED SARKIS AUG 28. MARONITE BISHOP OF BEIRUT AND ARMENIAN ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP ALSO CALLED ON SARKIS.

3. NOTES ON POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT. EDDE PREDICTS THAT IF CURRENT ARAB LEAGUE PEACE PLAN EFFORT FAILS, SYRIANS AND CHRISTIANS WILL OCCUPY HIGH METN AREA, THEN WEST BEIRUT AND SIDON. SAEB SALAM MAY SOON VISIT DAMASCUS, ALSO CARIO AND SAUDI ARABIA. KAMAL ASSAD IS STILL EXPECTED IN DAMASCUS. AL DEPUTY KHOLI HAS ACCEPTED SEPARATE INVITATIONS FROM BOTH ISLAMIC GROUP AND EDDE'S NATIONAL UNITY FRONT TO MEET AUG 31.

4. ON THE RIGHT. PHALANGE HAD LARGE MILITARY CEREMONY AUG 29 AT DICK EL-MEHD, SWEARING IN SOME 2500 NEW RECRUITS. FUNCTION ATTENDED ALSO BY CAMILLE CHAMOUN, CHARLES HELOU, ABU ARZ, GENERAL HANNA SAID AND COLONEL ANTOINE BARAKAT. CHAMOUN SAID WAR WOULD STILL GO ON FOR SOME TIME. PIERRE GEMAYEL SAID ARAB LEAGUE SHOULD SUPPORT KFOUR FRONT, SINCE IT IS AGGRIEVED PARTY IN CONFLICT. HE SAID WAR TO DATE HAS COST LEBANON 50,000 KILLED, 500,000 WOUNDED AND DISPLACED, AND 50 BILLION LEBANESE POUNDS IN MATERIAL LOSSES. SEPARATELY, RIGHTIST  
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RADIO CLAIMS WAR HAS COST PALESTINIANS 60,000 KILLED AND 100,000 WOUNDED. GEMAYEL ALSO SAYS HE IS SURPRISED THAT U.S. DIPLOMATS COULD STILL BE SEEKING INFORMATION ABOUT LEBANESE CIVIL WAR AFTER IT HAS BEEN IN PROGRESS FOR 17 MONTHS. SOURCES CLOSE TO FRANGIE REPORTED AS BELIEVING THAT SARKIS WILL WIND UP ALLIED WITH KFOUR FRONT IF SECURITY CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED SHORTLY AFTER HIS ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE. IN SUCH AN EVENTUALITY, THEY BELIEVE, KFOUR FRONT ITSELF MIGHT BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE MODERATE MOSLEM LEADERSHIP. PHALANGE POLITICAL CHIEF PAKRADOUNI SAYS HE CONFIDENT THAT SYRIAN STRATEGY, WITH OBJECTIVES OF REESTABLISHING SECURITY AND ORDER IN LEBANON, SAFEGUARDING BOTH LEBANON AND PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT, AND PREVENTION OF

"ZIONIZATION" OF CHRISTIAN LEBANON, WILL CONTINUE  
UNCHANGED AFTER SARKIS ASSUMED OFFICE.

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

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DLOS-06 OES-06 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /127 W

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O P 301322Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1631

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 78

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

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DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 7164

5. PALESTINAINS. BOTH FAROUK KADDOUMI AND ABOU HASSAN MAKING CONCILIATORY NOISES TOWARD SYRIANS.  
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ABOU HASSAN SAID PALESTINIANS PREPARED TO WITHDRAW FROM MOUNTAIN AREA, ON CONDITION THAT THIS WILL BRING PEACE TO LEBANON, BUT WARNED OF PALESTINIAN "ABILITY TO REACT IF EMBARRASSED." KADDOUMI REPORTED FROM KUWAIT AS URGING SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN RAPPROCHEMENT. HOWEVER, FATAH LEADER HANI HASSAN SAYS THAT WITHDRAWAL FROM MOUNTAINS MUST CLEARLY BE PART OF OVERALL SETTLEMENT. HANI HASSAN SAID PALESTINAINS SUSPECT DELIBERATE EFFORT TO DELAY ARAB SUMMIT MEETING, AND THAT PLO IS INCREASING ITS INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY. ON THE GROUND, Wafa PUBLISHED COMMUNIQUE FROM PALESTINIAN POLITICAL COUNCIL ANNOUNCING THAT ALL PALESTINIAN MALES AGES 18 TO 30 MUST REPORT FOR MOBILIZATION BY AUG 31. SOURCES SAID THAT MOBILIZATION, IF SUCCESSFUL, COULD INCREASE NUMBER OF PALESTINIANS UNDER ARMS FROM 25,000 TO 75,000.

6. PEACE PLAN. NO FURTHER WORD ON ARAB LEAGUE-SPONSORED PLAN, PENDING SYRIAN REACTION AND KFOR FRONT MEETING EXPECTED ON SEPT 1. HOWEVER, PALESTINIAN-PHALANGIST CONTACTS CONTINUE, FOCUSED ON HIGH METN AREA. AL DEPUTY KHOLI, PLO REPS AND PHALANGE REPS MET AGAIN AUG 28. BOTH AN-NAHAR AND L'ORIENT REPORT THAT PHALANGISTS AND PALESTINIANS AGREE ON LOCAL CEASEFIRE SOLUTION FOR HIGH METN AREA, REGARDLESS OF WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN ON OTHER FRONTS.

7. ARAB LEAGUE. KAMAL JUNBLATT SENT MESSAGES TO SAUDI KING KHALID AND CROWN PRINCE FAHD, APPEALING FOR "SAUDI INITIATIVE" TO END WAR, CLAIMING SYRIA COULD NO LONGER BE CONSIDERED NEUTRAL IN CONFLICT. L'ORIENT REPORTS TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ON PROPOSED AL SUMMIT: (1) SMALL SUMMIT WITH ONLY CHIEFS OF STATE OF EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, SYRIA AND PLO, SUPPOSEDLY SUPPORTED BY EGYPT, AND (2) MEETING OF ALL CHIEFS OF STATE. AL DEPUTY KHOLI WENT TO DAMASCUS, WHERE HE MET PLO REPS AND SYRIAN FORMER KHADDAM, AND MAY VISIT CAIRO BEFORE RETURNING TO BEIRUT.

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8. GROUND SITUATION. BEIRUT AREA. LULL GENERALLY CONTINUES, BUT SOME INCREASE IN MILITARY ACTIVITY LATE IN DAY OF AUG 29. PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST PRESSURE ON CONFRONTATION LINE IN AREA OF AIN EL-RUMMANEH, WHERE PHOSPHORUS BOMBS AND SMOKE BOMBS USED. ARTILLERY USE GENERALLY DIRECTLY RELATED TO CONFRONTATION LINE ACTIVITY.

9. TRIPOLI AREA. SYRIAN/CHRISTIAN SIEGE OF TRIPOLI CONTINUES TO TIGHTEN. SYRIANS NOW REPORTED TO HAVE ESTABLISHED CHECK POINTS ON ALL ROADS NORTH OF CITY. AS-SAFIR SAYS SYRIAN NAVY NOW STOPPING FISHING VESSELS OFF COAST. OTHER SHIPPING BEING PREVENTED BY SYRIAN NAVY AS WELL AS RECENT CYPRIOT DECISION TO BAN ENTRY OF LEBANESE INTO CYPRUS WITHOUT VISAS. WATER AND ELECTRICITY IN TRIPOLI REPORTEDLY BECOMING SCARCE. L'ORIENT SAYS SYRIAN FORCES ON NORTHERN FLANK OF SIEGE LINE NOT ADVANCING, BUT HEAVY FIGHTING IN CENTRAL SECTOR, WHERE FRANGIE'S ZGHORTA BRIGADE LOCATED, AND IN SOUTHERN SECTOR WHERE LEBANESE ARMY ELEMENTS LOYAL TO RIGHT LOCATED. PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS SAY HAVE REPELLED RIGHTIST ATTACKS IN AREA OF ALMA AND BEIT AUKER.

10. ISRAELI BORDER AREA. FOREIGN JOURNALIST QUOTED IN L'ORIENT AS REPORTING THAT SOME 8,000 REFUGEES FROM BEIRUT, BOTH PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE, LARGELY FROM NABAA AND TELL ZAATAR, NOW LOCATED IN SEVERAL VILLAGES ALONG ISRAELI BORDER. ABOUT HALF BEING ASSISTED BY PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS. ANOTHER REPORT SAYS CHRISTIAN LEBANESE VILLAGE OF RMEICHE NEAR BORDER HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO CHRISTIAN/CONSERVATIVE STRONGHOLD WITH PHALANGIST MILITIA GARRISON. PHALANGISTS SAID TO CONTROL NEARBY ACCESS TO BORDER ITSELF, WHERE ISRAELIS ADMITTING LEBANESE IN GROUPS OF TEN TO NEARBY FIRST-AID STATION.

11. ELSEWHERE. HIGH METN ACTIVITY STILL MOSTLY ARTILLERY FIRE, ALTHOUGH LEFTISTS CLAIM THEY REPELLED CHRISTIAN INFILTRATION ATTEMPT IN SINNINE-BISKINTA AREA. IN ALEY CASA, ARTILLERY CONTINUES.  
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IN THE BEKAA, AS-SAFIR SAYS SYRIANS HAVE SEARCHED VILLAGES OF QASSIRNABA, BEDNAYIL, AND NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN TAMANINE. "POPULAR RESISTANCE" SAID TO HAVE ATTACKED HOME OF IMAM MUSA SADR IN BAALBEK WITH ROCKETS FOR SECOND TIME. IN WOUTH, WE HAVE INDICATIONS OF SYRIAN REINFORCEMENTS IN JEZZINE AREA.

SYRIANS NOW HAVE OCCUPIED VILLAGE OF SUHMUR SOUTH OF LAKE QARA'UN. SYRIAN ARTILLERY FIRE ON PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST VILLAGES IN JEZZINE AREA CONTINUES, AND LEFTISTS CLAIM REPELLED SYRIAN EFFORT ENTER VILLAGE OF ROUM. SYRIAN SHELLING OF ANAN, WHERE TRANSFORMERS LOCATED, CUT ELECTRIC POWER TO SIDON, ZAHRANI REFINERY AREA AND JEZZINE. DESPITE RELATIVE MILITARY LULL, L'ORIENT ESTIMATES COUNTRY-WIDE 160 KILLED AND 200 WOUNDED AUG 28; AND COUNTRY-WIDE EXCEPT FOR JEZZINE AREA, 125 KILLED AND 173 WOUNDED ON AUG 29.

12. SYRIAN BORDER. LATEST TWIST, ACCORDING TO AN-NAHAR, IS THAT LEBANESE SEEKING TO ENTER SYRIA MUST NOW APPEND TO THEIR APPLICATIONS A GOOD-CONDUCT CERTIFICATE, FROM THEIR LOCAL LEBANESE GOVT OR PARTY OFFICIALS.  
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